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VOLKSWAGEN  
CRASH & BURN



How Labour's past helps explain the future >>Pages 14&15

PARTY OF  
CONFLICT

# Socialist Worker

£1 | No 2473 | 3 October 2015 | socialistworker.co.uk

## STUFF CAMERON'S PIG SOCIETY

# GIVE HIM THE CHOP



## PROTEST IN MANCHESTER THIS SUNDAY

SURROUND TORY PARTY CONFERENCE. ASSEMBLE 12 NOON, ALL SAINTS PARK, OXFORD ROAD. MARCH STARTS 1.30PM [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)

### ANTI-RACISM

#### Activists step up global refugee solidarity action

ANTI-RACISTS IN Britain are keeping up solidarity work as more refugees are killed trying to get into Europe.

At least 17 people died when their boat capsized off the Turkish coast last weekend.

Such drownings are a regular occurrence and the number of those who die is likely to go up.

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### LABOUR CONFERENCE



#### Left hopeful but Corbyn faces huge pressures

NEWLY ELECTED Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn faced his first big test at Labour's conference in Brighton this week.

Corbyn was elected leader of the party by a huge majority just over two weeks ago off the back of an unashamedly left wing campaign.

>>Pages 4&5

### NATIONAL GALLERY

#### Bosses under pressure from all-out strike

STRIKERS AT the National Gallery in central London marked their 100th strike day with a day of action called by the TUC on Thursday of last week.

More than 100 people rallied outside the gallery in central London.

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## THE THINGS THEY SAY

### 'An impossible place to tame'

Racist *Daily Mail* headline on pesky Somalia as British troops were sent in

### 'Loathsome and contemptible'

Tory Lord Norman Tebbit on Jeremy Corbyn

### 'He is a dangerous man'

Tory MP Andrew Bridgen on Corbyn

### 'Jeremy Corbyn is leading Britain's left into a political timewarp'

The Economist

### 'Communists, Trotskyites and members of the Militant Tendency'

The Mail whines about some of those it says are now "welcome" in Labour

### 'Clapped out, failed socialist agenda'

The Mail continues

### 'Already the least popular leader the party has had'

The Times joins in

### 'I've had an interesting week'

David Cameron following piggate



# David Cameron loves all the animals except for the foxes

**DAVID CAMERON** has yet to explain why he wrote to the government's top lawyer after a friend at Heythrop Hunt was charged with fox hunting in 2008.

A picture has emerged of Cameron riding out with the meet from Chipping Snorton.

It was taken at the final gathering of the Heythrop Hunt before the ban came into effect, a few days after Christmas 2004.

Every year, in the lull between Christmas and New Year, the Heythrop Hunt meets a few miles from Cameron's constituency home.

Apparently Cameron loves the country life.

According to one journalist quoted in Lord Ashcroft new biography, "He can scratch a

pig's back so effectively that the creature sighs."

Cameron told the same journalist that he could "castrate a ram with a pair of pliers".

While Cameron was leader of the opposition his friend Julian Barnfield, a professional huntsman with the Heythrop, was charged with various offences of hunting a fox.

The case was later dropped on a technicality.

Later, Chris Edgell, a former detective constable involved in the case, tried to obtain a copy of Cameron's letter using the Freedom of Information Act, but his application was rejected.

Coincidentally Heythrop Hunt was convicted three years ago of deliberately hunting a fox with dogs.

DAVID CAMERON and friends

**MANY PEOPLE** face difficult decisions as they get older—how to afford housing or social care services on a meagre pension, for example. But spare a thought for the queen.

She is apparently thinking of leaving Buckingham palace if prince Philip dies before her. It seems she prefers her Balmoral residence in Scotland, where she is "happiest and most relaxed".

Her Maj relaxing in Scotland

**SOME OF** the richest banks in the world have begged a council for tax breaks to make up for paying workers the Living Wage.

Tonbridge and Malling council in Kent rejected Barclays and HSBC's requests for business rate relief.

The banks later claimed there had been a misunderstanding.

## Sun's Lord sting is nothing to snort at

THE Metropolitan Police dropped their investigation into a peer apparently filmed snorting cocaine without bothering to interview him under caution.

Whether they would be so nice to an ordinary member of the public who had been filmed snorting white powder through a rolled up banknote is debatable.

The police waited 36 hours to search the London flat where he didn't take the drug.

The Sun on Sunday, whose scoop caught Sewel, told the Met it wouldn't release evidence for use in a prosecution.

It says this is on the

grounds of protecting the anonymity of sources.

In unrelated news Mazher Mahmood is currently suspended from work.

Mahmood has been charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

Alan Smith, a witness in the collapsed trial of the singer Tulisa Contostavlos has also been charged. They appear in court on 30 October.

## Key to Progress is to look back to 1980s

LABOUR RIGHT wing thinkers Progress are worried. Their concern is that their entirely principled supporters won't know how to deal with the Left.

So they produced a reading list including Michael Crick's tedious hatchet job on the Militant.

The main effect has been to push prices of old copies over £200.

Troublemaker has quite a few Labour tracts lying around. All serious offers considered.

And breathe

**ONE HUNDRED** and fifteen stressed-out MPs have taken up the offer of free "mindfulness courses" in parliament.

The eight 75-minute sessions—which take place in the middle of the working day—"have provided an oasis of calm and sowed precious seeds", according to one relaxed MP. Another added, "I was in a space where there were no demands on me and I didn't have to make a decision or give an opinion."

## Not getting in unless you attack Labour

NEW OLD New Labour methods are back.

The Labour Party blocked Socialist Worker from reporting at the leadership election conference. Then after we complained they banned us from the full Labour Party conference in Brighton.

Under Tony Blair Socialist Worker was barred from entering Labour conferences. A thaw in more recent years saw us let in.

The news outlets that are attacking Corbyn at every opportunity are welcome—along with the corporate sponsors.

It appears Socialist Worker is not. Our report from the conference is on pages 4&5.



**1 MILLION**

Workers in Britain are losing up to £25,000 from their pensions because of a "loophole"

**1.5 MILLION**

workers are denied pension top ups worth £185 million

## Mackenzie no mates mad at Muslims

SUN COLUMNIST and serial Hillsborough liar Kelvin MacKenzie targeted his whiny column at Muslims in the Sun newspaper this week.

MacKenzie told a tale of "political correctness gone mad". It involved him having to move in a hospital because Muslim women nearby were uncomfortable with his presence.

The story included the glorious headline, "Woman in burkha didn't want me near her...even behind a door". Troublemaker knows how she feels.

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# National Gallery strikers pile pressure on bosses

by NICK CLARK

**STRIKERS AT the National Gallery marked their 100th strike day with a day of action called by the TUC on Thursday of last week. More than 100 people rallied outside the gallery in central London.**

PCS union leader Mark Serwotka told the rally that the strike was “the most important dispute in Britain”.

He added that pressure from the strike, and the support it has won, mean ongoing talks could be “moving towards a settlement”.

Supporters from unions including the NUJ, Unison, UCU and NUT joined the rally. Striking traffic wardens from Camden and the artist Peter Kennard were there too.

Supporters elsewhere showed solidarity with strikers. PCS members and other supporters in Leeds protested outside Leeds Art Gallery.

Unison’s Transport for Greater Manchester branch donated £100.

Meanwhile members of the UCU lecturers’ union in Dundee collected more than £90 at a union meeting.

Sacked PCS rep Candy Udwin said supporters had helped keep the strike going.

Gallery workers have been fighting privatisation since January. They have been on all-out strike since the middle of August.

## Deal

Some 300 gallery jobs were outsourced to private security firm Securitas in a deal signed in August.

Strikers are fighting to secure their terms and conditions before Securitas takes over in November.

They are also demanding Candy’s reinstatement.

Bosses sacked her in May saying she breached confidentiality for drafting a question for a PCS official about the cost of hiring private firm CIS. CIS security guards had been



**STRIKERS AND supporters outside the National Gallery on Thursday of last week**

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

## BACK STORY

**Workers at London’s National Gallery are in dispute over conditions and union victimisation**

- Bosses have outsourced 300 jobs and workers want guarantees on their terms and conditions

- They also want sacked PCS union rep Candy Udwin to be reinstated

- Gallery workers have been on all-out strike since mid-August

- Their action, and the support they have won, has put pressure on bosses to resolve the dispute

brought in to run services in the gallery’s Sainsbury wing.

Serwotka said, “When management victimise union reps they do it for a reason. They want the workforce to know that they can do anything to them.

“So when we stand up for Candy it’s not just because she should have her job back. It’s because of the signal it sends.

“Can they intimidate and weaken the unions? Or do we say, united we stand, divided we fall? In this dispute our members have said, united we stand.”

Serwotka said he was “hopeful that we are moving towards a settlement

that all of us will find acceptable”.

He added, “But there can be no settlement without decent wages, without job security for the staff, without people being respected for what they do and without Candy being allowed to get her job back.”

Candy added, “We hope we can win and we hope that will be soon.

“If we can win by showing that strike action works that will be a victory not just for us but for everybody who wants to see a movement.”

## What’s your story?

Email with your ideas  
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

## Shaker Aamer to be freed

THE US government has announced it will release Shaker Aamer, the last British resident detained in Guantanamo Bay.

He has been held without charge since 2001.

John Clossick from the Save Shaker Campaign told Socialist Worker, “It’s brilliant that they are letting him out.

“But they say they will keep him another month while they inform Congress. They have no right to hold him at all—let him out now.

“At first we were going to call the campaign Justice for Shaker. But

how can he ever get justice after 13 years in a concentration camp?”

Shaker went to Afghanistan to work for an Islamic charity in 2001, and was there when the US invaded. US forces rendered him to Guantanamo Bay claiming he had been fighting for Al Qaida.

The US admitted in 2007 it had no evidence against him, but said it would release him to Saudi Arabia where he was born, not Britain where he lives with his family.

Public meeting in Parliament committee rooms, 9am, Wed 14 October. saveshaker.org

Shaker Aamer

## IN BRIEF

### Academies leech millions

ACADEMY conversions have cost English councils £32.5 million since 2010, newly released figures show.

Local authorities have to cover the costs of conversion and pay off debts left behind by schools converting.

This could have been spent on state-run schools.

### Care services are inadequate

NEARLY HALF of social care services inspected in the past year by the Care Quality Commission watchdog were failing.

Some 41 percent of services, including hospice and residential social care, were inadequate or required improvement.

### Signs of life in crush victim

FRESH INQUESTS are continuing into the deaths of fans who died as a result of the 1989 Hillsborough football disaster.

The jury heard evidence last week from fans that victim Andrew Mark Brookes showed signs of life and “did not look dead”.

For a longer version see socialistworker.co.uk

### Rich still live longer than us

THE GAP in life expectancy between rich and poor in England has barely changed in 25 years, said a new study.

The Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries and Risk Factors found the richest men live 8.2 years longer on average than the poorest.

## IN THIS WEEK

# 1968

### Police attack march in Derry

POLICE ATTACKED a civil rights march in Derry on 5 October 1968.

The repression sparked resistance through the night. March organiser Eamonn McCann wrote in Socialist Worker at the time, “This is not a riot. It is an uprising.”

## UNITE THE RESISTANCE

National conference 2015

## DEFENDING OUR UNIONS

...and organising to win

**Saturday 14 November, 11am-5pm  
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EP**

Speakers include: shadow chancellor John McDonnell, Green Party leader Natalie Bennett, NUT deputy general secretary Kevin Courtney, FBU general secretary Matt Wrack, Maz Saleem from Stand up to Racism and trade union activists from Greece. All speakers in a personal capacity

**Book online at uniteresist.org Email uniteresist@gmail.com**



# Left hopeful but Corbyn faces huge challenges

Nick Clark finds a mood of optimism at Labour conference in Brighton. But the right set out to undermine Corbyn

**NEWLY ELECTED** Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn faced his first big test at Labour's conference in Brighton this week.

Corbyn achieved a huge majority just three weeks ago off the back of an unashamedly left wing campaign.

His victory reflected a widespread desire for change.

Trade union delegate Dave told Socialist Worker, "The mood on conference floor is one of optimism. It's combative, but combative against the right enemy—the Tories."

A member of Labour Students added, "There's a lot of excitement. The meetings and the fringe events are very different to when I first came last year.

"Everyone is a lot more positive—it's like they've been reenergised. I think a lot of them are new members."

But Corbyn also faces opposition within Labour from forces to his right that want to undermine him or keep him in check.

Corbyn's first challenge came over the question of renewing Trident nuclear weapons.

But trade union delegates—including Unite and GMB—combined with constituency delegates to block the issue being debated at this year's conference.

## BACK STORY

**Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn faces the first big test since his landslide election in September**

●Labour's annual conference is taking place in Brighton this week

●Despite excitement about a new leadership, opposition to more radical policies was clear

●Many new members were angered that a key debate on Trident renewal was blocked

●But agreeing with the Tories on 'balancing the books' was not seen as concession to the right

The vote angered many of Corbyn's anti-Trident supporters (see right). This shows the pressure that Corbyn and his allies are under to placate the right so they can maintain party unity.

They are also under pressure to prove they can make Labour electable by moderating radical policies.

Newspaper columnist Owen Jones continued his pitch at one meeting for Labour to appeal to right wing voters as well as the left. But others struck a more militant tone.

Labour's shadow chancellor John McDonnell told a Labour Representation Committee rally,

JOHN McDONNELL (left) receives applause after his speech at Labour Party conference

"Have meetings and demonstrations—and get on picket lines as well. When workers take action, whether that's industrial or an occupation, there's no question that we've got to be supporting them.

## Beat

"That's how we're going to beat austerity and pave the way for a Labour government."

McDonnell is a strong supporter of the fight against austerity. But he revealed that Labour would support the Tory chancellor's fiscal charter.

This commits the government to always run a budget

surplus—a Tory excuse for cuts.

In his conference speech he said that Labour would tax the rich and clamp down on tax avoiders, not attack the poor.

This is refreshing. But agreeing with needing to "balance the books" is a concession to the right and their argument for austerity.

Yet Corbyn has enthusiastic supporters at the grassroots. Many of them welcomed McDonnell's speech.

David McMullen was one of them. He told Socialist Worker, "It's important to talk about getting rid of the deficit. But why is the government attacking the poor to pay for the

mistakes of the bankers?"

Trade unionist Dave added, "McDonnell's speech was excellent. It was socialist at its core, and showed Labour is serious about the economy."

Corbyn supporter Rebekah Lawrence said, "There are so many people who are saying he's not going to win but look at all the people joining Labour now—I hope there'll be enough of us to change things."

Dave agreed. He said, "Jeremy will overcome the problems now the same way he did during his election campaign—with the mass support that's behind him."

## FIGURE IT OUT

**330,000**

is what Labour now claims its membership stands at

**150,000**

people have joined Labour since May's general election

**60,000**

people have joined since Jeremy Corbyn's election as leader

SHADOW foreign secretary Hilary Benn hinted Labour would support British airstrikes in Syria and Jeremy Corbyn looks set to allow his MPs a free vote in parliament on the issue.

But this shouldn't be a matter of individual conscience—Western bombs won't help ordinary Syrians (see page 20).

**Benn wants to bomb**

Corbyn's enemies were encouraged by his concessions—and even used them to attack him further.

Right winger Chuka Umunna said Corbyn should have taken a clear position on on Trident and Syria.

He said, "If people don't know what the position of the Labour Party is then we're not going to look like a party of government.

"It's not sustainable for different people in our leadership to be saying different things."

## Right bides its time but still plots

LABOUR'S RIGHT wing made their presence felt at a number of fringe meetings.

Some 120 people attended a Labour First meeting. It wants to make sure the party is "kept safe from the organised hard left".

Speaking at the event, MP Rachel Reeves said Labour activists needed to "reassure people that the Labour Party is not all at one with the current leadership".

Others took a more cautious approach. MPs Tristram Hunt and Chuka Umunna, who previously organised against Corbyn, both called for members to support him.

Hunt told a Labour rally last Sunday, "The new leader has a powerful mandate from the party.

"But we also need to understand our loss at the general election. "On economics, on welfare, on immigration, the Labour Party was not trusted."

And at another fringe event Umunna said, "Before people start going down the road of 'if Jeremy fails', let's give the guy a chance to succeed." But he launched an oblique attack on Corbyn supporters with accusations of bullying and intimidation.

He said, "I'm all for party democracy. But I'm not for dictatorship." He was upset at being accused of being a Tory.

Labour's right resent the 60,000 who have joined since Corbyn's election who want the party to fight the Tories—not ape them.

## No Trident debate leaves delegates feeling cheated

MANY DELEGATES and supporters of Corbyn were angry that the debate on Trident nuclear weapons had been blocked from the conference agenda.

A key pledge of Corbyn's leadership campaign was to oppose Trident renewal when parliament votes on it next year.

Leila, who had signed up as a supporter to vote for Corbyn—and is thinking of joining Labour—was one of them.

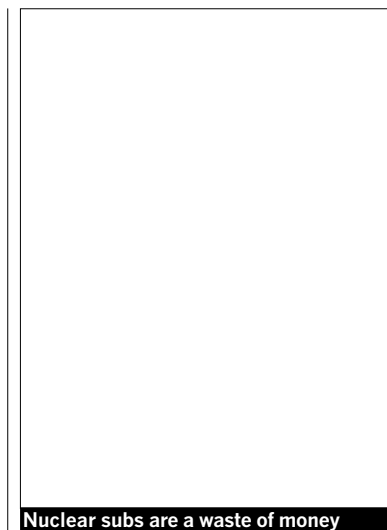
## Scrap

She told Socialist Worker, "I'm very disappointed. The people who don't want to scrap Trident are entitled to their opinion.

"But to block a debate is very disappointing from the Labour Party."

Corbyn sent a message to a fringe meeting held by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to reassure them he was still committed to scrapping Trident.

People at the meeting shared Leila's frustration that the debate



had been blocked.

Some called for a special conference to debate Trident renewal.

Others were angrier.

One speaker said, "If you're a delegate to conference you've been cheated—you haven't got a debate."

**Socialist Worker**  
WHAT WE THINK

## BUILD A MOVEMENT THAT CAN TOPPLE OUR RULERS

**T**HETORIES think they are born to rule—and sometimes it seems like nothing can bring them down.

Jeremy Corbyn would no longer be Labour leader if he faced accusations of having sexual relations with a dead pig.

Yet David Cameron and the Tories are still in office—and we have to bring them down.

The Tories' re-election in May was a huge blow, but they aren't as powerful as they appear. Confronted with a real fight, they would soon lose their complacency.

Corbyn's election as Labour leader shows there is a hunger for an alternative to the Tories and the Labour MPs who won't challenge them.

Millions have been inspired by the possibility that the Tories will face a genuine opposition in parliament.

But the fight they want is more than just in the House of Commons.

Corbyn and his many thousands of supporters have talked about creating a new movement.

They will get demoralised if the energy of the campaign gets lost in procedural arguments within the

Labour Party. We have to capture the moment.

The recent refugee solidarity actions show that racism can be resisted.

But the right wing press and the racists have been quick to try and regroup and whip up fears about refugee numbers.

All this means we can't afford to wait until the next general election—we have to get organised now.

The challenge is to turn the mood expressed by support for Corbyn's policies into real resistance that can shake the Tories to the core.

The TUC march in Manchester and the People's Assembly protests are part of it.



**Our challenge is to turn the mood into a resistance that can shake the Tories to the core**

See membership form on page 16

## OCCUPY TO SAVE REDCAR

**S**TEEL GIANT SSI's decision to mothball its Redcar plant and throw 1,700 workers on the dole is a disgrace. The company whined that it wasn't making enough profits.

Local Labour MP Anna Turley rightly said the government should nationalise the plant. But it will

take workers' action to make that happen. And union leaders have been reluctant to call it.

Some say we have to "be realistic" and accept some cuts. Others say there's little they can

do faced with powerful bosses.

Others claim there isn't enough support for a fight.

Yet this pessimism comes from the top and filters down. If union leaders say there's nothing we can do to save jobs, it's no wonder that workers feel powerless.

But if union leaders organised a campaign with industrial action at its heart, this could galvanise workers into action.

Workers have immense power. Without their labour, no profits are made.

If workers withdraw their labour, or occupy workplaces, they can force bosses to back down.

Workers could occupy the Redcar plant and refuse to leave until it is nationalised. They would win support from ordinary people across Britain who are sick of watching jobs disappear.

We do have the power to save jobs. But we need to push our union leaders to call the kind of fight that can do it. And if they won't call it, then workers should take action without them.



Supporters celebrate Corbyn's election win before a London Refugees are Welcome demo—but the movement behind that campaign needs to oppose the Labour right

## Socialist Review OCTOBER ISSUE

Corbyn: the triumph and the challenge by Shaun Doherty and Sally Campbell

Reformism and Islamism in Egypt by Anne Alexander

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## ANALYSIS

SIMON BASKETTER



## Class prevails as the nervy Tories fall out

IT TOOK a week. Asked about the allegation that he put his penis in the mouth of a dead pig, David Cameron said, "Everyone can see why the book was written and everyone can see straight through it."

"As for the specific issue raised, a very specific denial was made a week ago and I've nothing to add to that."

In fact, Downing Street has said nothing about the anecdote on the record. Which cleared that up.

Meanwhile Lord Ashcroft's biography of Cameron lays bare in excruciating detail the extraordinary advantages of David Cameron's background—utterly fantastical in wealth and privilege.

Ashcroft, having donated £8 million to the Tories, was furious that Cameron did not keep to his promise to give the billionaire a ministerial job.

Ashcroft did not share the aristocratic parentage of his school classmates—who included "eight Honourables, four Sirs, two Majors, two Princesses, two Marchionesses, one Viscount, one Brigadier, one Commodore, one Earl, one Lord and the Queen".

Perhaps it is heartening that a boss, based in Belize for tax reasons, cannot buy his way fully into the heart of the British establishment. Perhaps.

Cameron might well assume that he was born to rule. As an aside, since it is the conference season, journalists will again praise his ability to speak without notes. It is a skill learned in the rote teaching of an Eton education.

On Cameron's own account he was born with "two silver spoons" in his mouth.

Is it a coincidence that the current chairman of the Tories, Lord Feldman, used to play tennis with Cameron at Oxford? Or that Cameron's closest advisers include Oliver Letwin, Jo Johnson and Ed Llewellyn, who all went to Eton?

Cameron is the 19th Old Etonian prime minister. Another seven former prime ministers went to Harrow, and six to Westminster. Cameron's use of patronage to reward his old friends is nothing new. His political hero Harold Macmillan stuffed his government with 35 Old Etonians in the 1950s.

But in the 1970s estate owners briefly gave way to the estate agents at the heart of the Tory party. It saw the Tories elect Margaret Thatcher as leader.

### Frustration

The frustration was that those who were too privileged had become lazy about hammering the poor. The toffs were pushed a little into the background.

But as the aristocracy like to say, class prevails. Thatcher failed to stem Britain's global decline, despite her vicious assault on the working class. That had a number of consequences.

One was a fragmenting of the British ruling class consensus in favour of European integration. That fragmentation still gnaws at the Tory party.

The other was that eventually the Tories returned to what they know best—extreme privilege.

And patronage doesn't buy unity. Ashcroft says Boris Johnson won an extra £90 million to fund London policing in return for "no mischief" at the party conference in 2011.

That shows how corrupt the Tories are but also how nervous.

With Cameron likely to step down in 2018, George Osborne and Boris Johnson have been sniping at each other not very subtly for months.

They all share the right sort of education but they all want the top job to do us over. The hidden obtuse rows in the Tory party always reflect real things.

For the Tories, the prospect of office was enough to calm divisions in the run-up to the last election.

As Britain's decline and economic crisis continues, those divisions will continue to fester.

The bosses are divided on Europe and on how hard to push austerity—and so therefore are the Tories. The potential for both to become a rift haunts the government.

As the Tories come together for their conference in Manchester, behind the stage managed tedium there are real divisions that point to their weakness.

It is not unlike a posh party, which for all the embossed invitations involves a drunk posho putting his penis in a dead pig's head.



JACK AT the Socialist Worker Student Society stall in London South Bank University

PICTURES: SOCIALIST WORKER

# Students inspired by Corbyn say something must change

by SADIE ROBINSON

**STUDENTS HAVE been affected by the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader and the atmosphere of hope it has created.**

At London's South Bank University many students told Socialist Worker that Corbyn had made politics interesting.

Ian said, "I wasn't too bothered about politics. All politicians looked the same and sounded the same. But Jeremy Corbyn sounds a lot more honest."

Jack added, "Corbyn has made me take notice of politics. You can tell the difference just by looking at his attire. He spends nothing on himself."

### People

"You think, there's a man working for the people. And he wants to know what people think. He treks around doing all these talks."

Chloe voted Tory because she thought they would deal with the recession, but is now looking to the left. "I thought things couldn't get any worse," she said.

"Then they did. I was lied to. I didn't know there would be all these cuts."

Mohammed, who came to Britain from Iraq in the 1990s, remembers Corbyn from Stop the War protests.

"A lot of politicians are just

in it for themselves," he said. "But we see Corbyn coming with us on demonstrations. I loved it when he said he was going on the refugees protest after he was elected."

Alex said, "He's been attacked in the press to the point of ridiculousness. You think, if someone is attacked like that, it probably means he's quite good."

Alice, a nursing student, is nervous about the future. "We don't know if there will be safe staffing levels," she said.

"Or whether people will



Nursing student Alice

have to pay for nursing degrees."

Laura, another nursing student, said, "They are reducing pay for junior doctors, so what will they do to us?"

"There are not enough nurses. And the stress is unbelievable. We're given too many patients. You can't do it—and mistakes will be made."

### Changes

Students want changes now, not possible improvements in the future. As Alice put it, "I like what Corbyn is saying but we've got another four years of this government. How do you reverse any changes that the Tories make?"

Mohammed added, "We need someone to stand with the students and help us out. I'm hoping Corbyn won't be like the rest and say things but not do anything."

Yacqub was angry at the attacks on students. "There used to be an emergency grant you could claim, but for next year that's demolished," he said. "We already have problems—what about future generations?"

"When they tripled tuition fees there were riots. I'm not sure protests make a difference, but we have to show that we care."

## Fight austerity, racism and war

Join the revolutionaries—  
Socialist Worker Student Society

**THE Socialist Worker Student Society (SWSS) fights for a world without oppression, for real democracy and for people before profit.**

**SWSS organises meetings, debates, protests and solidarity actions**



**on campus. SWSS stands for student and worker solidarity, for socialism and revolution, and against racism, fascism, sexism and homophobia. Join us.**

Look for **Socialist Worker Student Society** on Facebook



**Got a story?**

Email ideas to [reports@socialistworker.co.uk](mailto:reports@socialistworker.co.uk)

# Protest is our chance to take on the Tories

Activists are gearing up to confront the Conservatives in Manchester, reports **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

**THE TORIES** are set to announce a barrage of new attacks on workers, migrants and the poor at their conference in Manchester.

But people in the city and across Britain are mobilising against them. Thousands were expected to join the TUC demonstration this Sunday and the People's Assembly activities between Saturday and Wednesday of next week.

Mark Krantz has been building for the protest with the People's Assembly in Manchester. "People are buzzing," he told Socialist Worker.

"We're ready to greet Tory delegates with the message 'Conservatives not welcome in Manchester', which we're projecting onto their hotel and conference centre."

Activists are fighting to have the biggest possible turnout on Sunday and make it a focal point to step up resistance against the Tories.

Coaches are coming from across the country.

The police have a "ring of steel" around Manchester city centre to protect the swarm of 12,000 Tory delegates. A broad range of activists have been building for the TUC

## EVENTS

**The Tories are set to meet in Manchester from 4-7 October**

- The TUC has called a national demonstration on Sunday 4 October. Go to [tuc.org.uk/NoToAusterity](http://tuc.org.uk/NoToAusterity)
- This is part of a week of events organised by the People's Assembly. Go to [thepeoplesassembly.org.uk](http://thepeoplesassembly.org.uk)
- Groups including Stand up to Racism and Disabled People Against Cuts plan protests as Tory ministers speak

demo—from trade unionists and anti-racists to disability rights and benefits campaigners.

Mark added, "The local trades council has been out leafleting and there's plans for workplace delegations to come down to the demo."

Manchester Metropolitan University student Sian Robbins told Socialist Worker, "We're going to be part of a student bloc."

"Lots of young people just really want to demonstrate and be part of politics."

## Rampaging

The Tories are ramping up racism against Muslims and migrants. Stand Up to Racism activists have organised a feeder march from the city's Moss Side and won the TUC's backing.

The demo can be a launchpad for resistance—we cannot wait four more years under Tory rule.

Unite the Resistance has organised a meeting on fighting the Trade Union Bill for straight after the demo (see ad, left).

Mark said, "I really think some of the city's poorest people will be out on Sunday—it will be the class on the streets of Manchester."

Sian said, "It shows that if you don't agree with austerity you can do something about it."

"You can get together, pick up a placard and change things."



TRADE UNIONISTS march as part of the People's Assembly demonstration in June

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

## HOUSING

# Homeless people pay the price of the Tories' attacks on council housing

by **DAVE SEWELL**

THE DEATH of a two month old baby boy last week who lived in a car in Dorset with his homeless parents underlined the shocking extent of Britain's housing crisis.

The cause of baby Donald's death was unknown as Socialist Worker went to press.

But his family's circumstances were made much more difficult when they were evicted by their private landlord.

They didn't have the money for a deposit on somewhere new—and councils had failed to get them a permanent home.

Councillors in Donald's father's home town of Bournemouth refused to house them at all because Donald's mother was from Kent, which she had left to flee an abusive partner.

Meanwhile London homelessness charity New Horizon Youth Centre revealed it has started giving young homeless people bus tickets to sleep on night buses because it can't find them beds.

But the government, council

leaders and housing association landlords are driving through more ways to push housing stock into the private sector.

Housing association bosses were debating a deal with the Tories as Socialist Worker went to press that would implement the right to buy policy on a voluntary basis.

This would further reduce the number of homes available at "social rents".

Bailiffs evicted the last resident of Sweets Way estate in Barnet, north London, on Thursday of last week, as well as protesters there to support him.

## Demolished

The estate is to be demolished and redeveloped for private landlords at much higher rents.

The Fred Wigg and John Walsh towers in Leytonstone, east London, also face a "renovation" that would hand more council properties over to private landlords.

Tenants protested there on Monday and Tuesday mornings of this week to stop the council removing doors onto the balconies

in the run-up to the works.

North London's Haringey council revealed last week that it plans to rehouse some of the 4,000 council tenants whose homes it is knocking down in private rentals.

Yet it still found £86,000 for a new logo. This follows a march hundreds-strong through the borough against the plans earlier this month.

Protesters celebrated outside a south London court on Friday of last week.

The Guinness Trust housing association was forced to adjourn proceedings to evict a family from the estate it wants to knock down in Brixton. They demand the right to be rehoused.

Trade unions and housing campaigns have called a People's Housing Conference in London on Saturday 10 October to build on this resistance.

Speakers were set to include Labour's London mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan and Alex Kenny from the National Union of Teachers' executive.

Register for the People's Housing Conference here [bit.ly/1LK2BXY](http://bit.ly/1LK2BXY)

● **Defend our unions**

● **Stop the Tories' Trade Union Bill**

Unite the Resistance public rally

**4 OCTOBER  
MANCHESTER**

straight after TUC demo

The Comedy Store,  
Arches 3 & 4 Deansgate Locks,  
Whitworth Street West M1 5LH

## IN BRIEF

**Egypt's prisoner release PR bid**

THE EGYPTIAN regime released and pardoned 100 prisoners on Wednesday of last week.

They included two journalists, Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed.

They had been jailed, along a third colleague, for reporting "false news" about the now banned Muslim Brotherhood.

Military-backed president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi wants to make himself look like less of a dictator in the eyes of world leaders. Yet thousands of political prisoners are still in jail across Egypt.

**Catalans vote to break with Spain**

A MAJORITY of Catalan voters backed parties calling for independence from Spain in regional parliamentary elections last Sunday.

Catalan's president Artur Mas called the election as an alternative vote on independence after the Spanish authorities blocked a referendum.

His right wing nationalist



Right winger Artur Mas

party ran as part of a broad coalition for independence. It won 62 out of 135 MPs.

The anti-capitalist left CUP party, which includes the Socialist Workers Party's sister organisation En Lluita, won 10 seats with almost 340,000 votes. It held a rally of 4,000 in Barcelona before the vote.

**Mass March for Choice in Dublin**

SOME 10,000 people took to part in a March for Choice in Dublin on Saturday of last week.

They were demanding greater access to abortion and repeal of the anti-choice Eighth Amendment of the Irish constitution.

Left wing MP Clare Daly told the march that the movement to repeal the Eighth Amendment was now an "unstoppable force".

She said, "The days of secrecy and shame, of the Magdalene laundries and the Mother and Baby homes belong to a different Ireland."

# Activists step up global refugee solidarity action

by KEN OLENDE

**ANTI-RACISTS IN Britain are keeping up solidarity work as more refugees are killed trying to get into Europe.**

At least 17 people drowned when their boat capsized off the Turkish coast last weekend. It was heading for the Greek Island of Kos.

Such drownings are a regular occurrence and the number of those who die is likely to go up.

Around 5,000 refugees a day are arriving at the Greek islands by boat from Turkey. As the summer draws to an end seas are getting stormier.

Britain's Tory prime minister David Cameron has tried to make it appear that people who have risked their lives to get to Europe are less deserving than those unable to travel.

Socialist Worker has always argued that everyone should have the right to travel freely.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres pointed out, "One of the reasons that refugees started to move in such big numbers was because international assistance declined."

Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) groups are being set up around the Britain.

They are organising meetings to raise support for refugees and collecting money and goods to take to the impoverished people.

**Delegation**

SUTR is organising a second solidarity delegation to the French port of Calais for Saturday 17 October.

The government and right wing media's appalling racist response to the humanitarian crisis in Calais should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

Refugees making the long journey from the Greek islands to western Europe get caught in eastern European states' shifting policies, as different countries open and close their borders.

Germany has currently halted rail services to Austria and Hungary temporarily this week.

A young man was hit by a freight train and killed near the Calais entrance to the Channel Tunnel on Thursday of last week.

The unidentified teenager is believed to be from Eritrea or South Sudan.

This brings the total number of people known



REFUGEES ON the Greek island of Lesbos

PICTURE: AMAL AZZUDIN

to have died making the crossing to 12 this summer.

The same week the French authorities deported two men arrested at the camp to Sudan.

This was in breach of a decision by the European Court of Human Rights, which said that it is not a safe destination to send people to.

On Friday of last week hundreds of people from the camp demonstrated against the violence and racism of the French state.

Police had repeatedly attacked refugees over the last week to reduce the area the camp takes up.

The British government says that the first of the Syrian refugees it is taking directly from camps in the region have arrived.

This is part of the "vulnerable persons resettlement scheme" it is punting as an alternative to taking a share of refugees.

It will not say how many this is or where they are. Cameron wants to get "deserving" people from the camps.

They will not be granted a s y l u m status, but will be able to apply for it after five years. [standuptoracism.org.uk](http://standuptoracism.org.uk)

## Greek movement resists Nazis' attempt at revival

THOUSANDS marched through Athens last Saturday to mark two years since Nazis murdered anti-racist rapper Pavlos Fyssas.

Syrian and Afghan refugees marched alongside other migrants, students and trade unionists.

The fascists are trying to stage a comeback using racism against refugees—but people are confronting them.

The demonstration showed that the movement is ready to fight back after the Greek election.

Left party Syriza was re-elected despite signing up to a devastating austerity deal with the European Union.

Leading Pakistani activist Javed Aslam was charged with disturbing the peace this week, after shouting on a megaphone on an anti-corruption protest outside the Pakistani Embassy.

He pointed out that protesting cleaners had shouted in the streets for over a year. Astonishingly the magistrate replied, "Order in this city must finally be restored".



Murdered anti-racist Pavlos Fyssas

But prime minister Alexis Tsipras had to sack minister Dimitris Kammenos of Syriza's right wing Independent Greeks coalition partners for making homophobic and anti-semitic statements on Twitter.

This was a sign that the new government is weak—and its supporters more critical. **Petros Constantinou in Athens**

Petros is coordinator of the Movement Against Racism and the Fascist Threat. It has called an international meeting on 10-11 October. See [tinyurl.com/oqlxfkv](http://tinyurl.com/oqlxfkv)

David Cameron is ramping up attacks on migrants

## Remember the riot

EXACTLY 30 years ago this week was the Broadwater Farm riot in Tottenham, north London. It followed the death of Cynthia Jarrett during a police raid.

Tottenham is known for its riots. Most recently a riot followed the death of Mark Duggan, again at the hands of the police.

Broadwater Farm didn't happen in isolation. It came a week after the shooting of Cherry Groce had sparked a riot in Brixton, south London. This was the year of the Miners' Strike. People had the confidence to have a go.

It's hard to imagine an MP now quoting rioters as Bernie Grant did saying police got a "bloody good hiding".

The fightback was effective but the police never forgave it.

The police occupied the estate and kicked in perhaps a third of the doors and arrested 400 people.

They were determined to get someone put away for the death of PC Blakelock during the riot. There were no eyewitnesses and no forensic evidence.

Six innocent people were arrested, and three convicted. It was 2003 before Winston Silcott was let out.

The rising forced the police to look into racism. It made the authorities look into the lack of prospects for working class people and black people in particular.

It was a vindication of the need to fight back.

But rioting is not a good way to achieve long term change. It's part of a wider struggle that involves the working class who have real power.

Gary McFarlane  
North London



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

## Volunteers in Greece knew they had to help refugees

I JUST returned from a Glasgow Campaign to Welcome Refugees solidarity delegation to Greece.

I read about how we helped at a "reception centre" on the island of Lesbos (Socialist Worker, 26 September). The reality was a rickety table under a tree, giving out basic supplies and directions. But what it does is vital.

It seems chaotic, but it's a brilliant solidarity effort, bringing together volunteers from all over Europe who jump in to help refugees who only have their head above water.

Eric and his family, who set this up, hadn't been activists. But when they saw refugee boats coming ashore just by where they live they knew they had to help.

And their operation has grown as more and more dinghies arrive. When we were there they were helped by volunteer doctors and midwives.

Efi, another activist we met, used the money we raised to help pay for the funerals of refugees who drowned on the crossing.

She is also arranging a meeting of local activists to put an alternative voice to the island's tourist trade, which is hostile to the migrants. They want to demand that the Greek government and the European Union provides safe passage for refugees and proper shelter. They hope to call a pro-refugee demonstration.

In Athens we talked with Petros Constantinou from the anti-racist

Keerfa organisation. It is one of several groups helping refugees there. Keerfa is using money to help with housing people. Others are helping with schooling and unaccompanied children.

All are worried that the weather is getting worse. The refugees are now so desperate that they may continue trying to cross the Mediterranean through the stormy autumn.

All the groups need more money. People helping refugees need to coordinate what they are doing—between Lesbos and Calais for instance so the appropriate things get to the right places.

Margaret Woods  
Glasgow Campaign to Welcome Refugees  
Donate to [bit.ly/10wa9PD](http://bit.ly/10wa9PD)

## No return to danger of backstreet abortions

ABOUT 5,000 "pro-life" Christian fundamentalists joined an annual national march in Berlin last week.

They want the complete criminalisation of abortion. They want to "secure the survival of the German people". They rave against "gender dilution" and talk of a "babycast".

A counter demonstration of 2,000 blockaded them and halted their march for about two hours.

But on the same day

3,500 anti-abortionists marched in Zurich, Switzerland, almost unchallenged.

If they win it will send women seeking an abortion into the backstreets, threatening their lives.

An 11 year old girl who has been raped would be forced to carry a child to term as recently happened in Paraguay.

We have to fight them.

Rosemarie Nuenning  
Marx21, Berlin

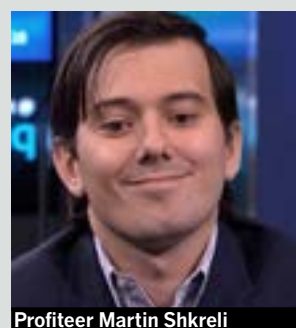
## The barbarism of an Aids drug profiteer

US COMPANY Turing Pharmaceuticals has raised the price of Aids drug Daraprim by more than 5,000 percent.

It acquired the rights to the drug in August and raised the price of a dose from just under £9 to almost £500.

Company boss, Martin Shkreli, justified this outrageous profiteering by saying the company is now "charging the right price that the markets and prior owners missed".

He was more honest on Twitter, messaging that



Profiteer Martin Shkreli

given the media had "pointed a finger" at him, he had pointed "one back at em, (sic) but not the index or pinkie". The

ruthless and rapacious Shkreli is following the venal logic of capitalism—that nothing is more important than maximising profits.

This is what Rosa Luxemburg meant when she said our choice is "socialism or barbarism".

Isn't it time we changed things so that abominations perpetrated by the grasping vermin like Shkreli can't happen? Isn't it time for socialism?

Sasha Simic  
North London

Just a thought...

## Corbyn has to compromise

I HAVE no problem with Jeremy Corbyn compromising on issues. I think most people know he is going to have to give way on some things. I still want him as leader and feel safe with him at the helm.

Brenda Poole  
on Facebook

## European dictatorship

YOUR article saying we must leave the European Union (Socialist Worker, 16 June), didn't seem to mention that it is run by an unelected dictatorship.

I don't think we need any other reason to get out.

Plus they have effectively outlawed socialist principles, for example by making it illegal for us to renationalise the railways.

Paul  
by email

## Wrong on how many homes

YOUR ARTICLE Should We Limit How Many Migrants are Allowed In? (Socialist Worker, 8 September) makes a serious error.

It is not "tens of thousands" to house in "600,000 empty homes". A 2012 Gallup survey projected 45 million people would want to come. That is 75 migrants per empty home.

This does not justify keeping immigrants out, but does require that housing is allocated on the basis of need.

Timothy Baldwin  
Selby

## Experience of immigration

BASED ON past experience, most countries were filled by immigrants and imperialists and colonialists.

Refugees are only immigrants and using Islamophobic excuses to prohibit them is just plain stupid.

Vira Amalia  
Indonesia

## Is it really a strange act?

DID DAVID Cameron have sex with a pig? That's natural. Same species!

Alan Creswell-Laing  
on Facebook

# CASH & BURN

Volkswagen have been caught trying to rig emissions tests to make their diesel cars seem “cleaner”. The scandal has exposed how car manufacturers bend and break the rules in the drive for profit. But, as **Simon Basketter** argues, corruption and con tricks aren’t about bucking the system—they’re part of it

**T**HE EXPOSURE of a con trick by giant car maker Volkswagen (VW) could be the biggest in the industry’s history. And considering the industry has repeatedly and systematically put profit and power before people and planet that’s quite an achievement.

In the banking industry’s rigging of the Libor interest rate, nine banks have so far paid out a total of £9 billion. VW could be hit for more than that in fines alone.

And there are countless law suits to come.

The company plan was simple if unoriginal—to make VW the world’s biggest car manufacturer by 2018.

And its ambition to overtake Toyota and General Motors (GM) was succeeding. It was based on trebling sales in the US. And vitally by developing scams to lie about how clean the fuel was.

VW used a “defeat device”, a programme in its diesel cars’ software.

The programme identifies whether the vehicle is running on a rolling road in laboratory conditions and ensures the car is running in its cleanest mode, limiting particulate emissions.

VW was trying to show diesel was as clean as petrol alternatives. In fact VW diesel cars were emitting 40 times the amount of legally allowed levels of nitrogen oxides.

In an inevitably opaque corporate

statement the company admitted to the software being in other VW Group diesel cars.

Those “discrepancies” affect some 11 million vehicles. The company confirmed “a noticeable deviation between bench test results and actual road use”.

VW has been fiddling the figures for years on both sides of the Atlantic. But so have other manufacturers. Tests run by one consultancy, Emissions Analytics, found that emissions levels in 395 out of 400 cars were higher than claimed.

Even when they don’t break the rules, it’s bad. Car manufacturers are allowed to submit heavily modified prototype cars into the EU’s fuel-efficiency and emissions-testing regime.

Weighty features such as a car’s sound system are often removed before tests.

Tyres are filled with a special gas to enhance the miles that can be covered per gallon of fuel. And cars are run at the maximum permitted temperature of 29C because engines are more efficient in hot conditions.

The car industry is a serial offender. Recent years have seen a series of scandals in which auto companies lied and cheated to cover up gross negligence or lawlessness.

For over a decade, GM hid a problem with ignition switches that resulted in engine cut-offs, the disabling of steering mechanisms and the deployment of air bags.

Some 2.6 million vehicles had the defect. GM did not begin to recall them until at least 124 people had been killed and 275 injured because of it.



## The all new Volkswagen Jetta. A car for the people

Barack Obama’s administration in the US announced a deal with GM effectively foregoing any criminal penalties and imposing a fine.

Japanese supplier Takata equipped tens of millions of vehicles around the world with defective air bags. At least eight people were killed and more than 100 injured.

Toyota had to pay £800 million

in fines in the US and recall millions of vehicles that accelerated on their own. At least five people died as a result of the defect.

People who defend capitalism and the market say scandal and corruption are down to a few individuals who get carried away.

But the problem is more fundamental. It is caused by the way capitalism works.

The logic of the system is to keep profits high and costs low. And that means that there is little need for bosses to issue specific instructions. But it does mean increasing profit makes cutting corners not just likely but necessary.

Firms expand production hoping to rake in more profit. Each wants to outdo its rivals.

Share prices soar on the expectation that profits will roll in.

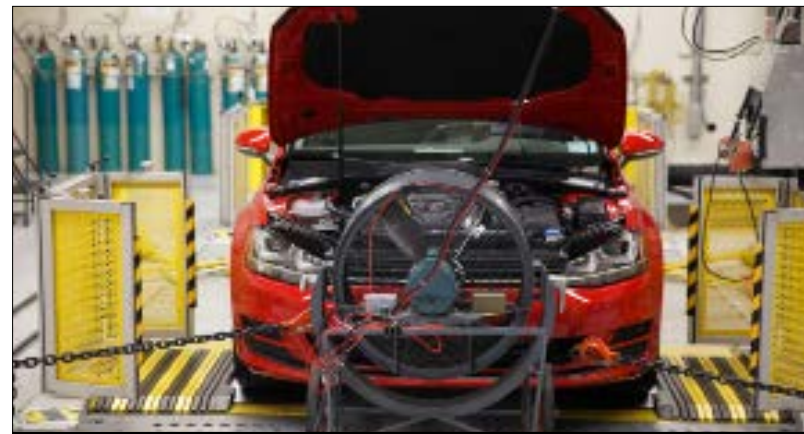
These inflated share values mean companies can borrow heavily to expand their production even further—and we pay the price.



**VW said diesel was as clean as petrol but its cars are 40 times over the limit for nitrogen oxides**



Thousands of lives are lost every year because of air pollution caused by diesel fuel



European car emissions testing is a standing joke in the industry

## DING DING WENT THE TROLLEY

SCAMS HAVE always been at the heart of the motor industry.

A group called National City Lines was formed in the 1920s to buy up streetcar systems around the US. It was made up of several firms including General Motors, Firestone, Standard Oil of California and Phillips Petroleum.

Although National City Lines was found guilty of conspiracy to monopolise public transit, it was only fined £3,500. But it had smashed the local public transport system across the country.

This set a method that still exists in transport today—including the last 40 years in Britain.

Spending on transport means building roads for private cars to go on. In reality it’s a multibillion dollar subsidy of the car industry.

offered subsidies and sweeteners to persuade car makers and the public to buy diesel.”

Diesel was made cheap, encouraging people to choose diesel cars over petrol ones. In 1995 the market share of diesel vehicles in Britain was under 10 percent. By 2012 it had shot up to over 50 percent.

There are now nearly 12 million diesel cars in use in Britain.

The Volkswagen fiasco has been portrayed as a “mistake” made by politicians who put dealing with climate change over people’s health. The truth is those at the top care little for either.

We can protect human health and the environment.

But this would require pumping resources into expanding public transport, choosing renewable energy sources over fossil fuels and tackling the enormous waste of capitalist society.

## PARTICLES THAT PENETRATE

THE MOTOR industry is a major contributor to global warming—and premature death.

But many people use cars because public transport is unreliable, underresourced, overcrowded or expensive.

It’s estimated that some 50,000 people in Britain die prematurely because of nitrogen oxide emitted by diesel vehicles.

Diesel vehicles produce 15 percent less CO<sub>2</sub> than petrol ones do, but four times more nitrogen dioxide pollution and 22 times more particulates.

These tiny particles can penetrate human lungs, brains and hearts. New research has shown that diesel fumes can trigger cancers and heart attacks. They can stunt children’s growth.

A European Commission agreement in 1998 committed passenger car makers to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 25 percent over ten years.

Simon Birkett, director of the Clean Air London group, said this was “practically an order to switch to diesel”.

He said, “Britain, along with Germany, France and Italy,

## PEOPLE’S CAR THAT NEVER WAS

BEFORE THE Second World War, Germany was one of western Europe’s least motorised societies. This was partly because its public transport system, before the Nazis got hold of it, was quite good.

The car, Hitler declared, responded to the individual will, unlike the railway, which had brought “individual liberty in transport to an end”.

So he ordered the building of motorways and the government introduced The People’s Car—Volkswagen.

More than a quarter of a million people enrolled in the scheme to buy the new car. But not one saver got a Volkswagen—the money all went into arms production.

More than 200 managers dismissed by denazification tribunals had the verdicts overturned by the British.

Heinrich Nordhoff had worked for General Motors but he was banned from employment for using slave labour to make trucks for the Nazis. So the British put him in charge of Volkswagen.

The company had a head start on its rivals. And the Volkswagen became a symbol for post-war Germany.



## MASSIVE FRAUD LIES AT THE VERY HEART OF THIS CORRUPT SYSTEM

**\$** THE BANK of Credit and Commerce International became known as the Bank of Cocaine and Criminals International in 1991 due to money laundering and widespread fraud. It went bust owing more than £10 billion.

**\$** THIS year multinational Toshiba was plunged into scandal after it overstated operating profits by about £780 million. The company saw a drop in sales from £36 billion to £25 billion after the financial crisis and the Fukushima nuclear disaster. But it kept profits high by fixing the figures.

**\$** ENRON WENT bankrupt in 2001 after its obscuring of huge debts was revealed. The energy trader imploded—wiping out £49 billion of shareholder funds, and the pensions and jobs of thousands.

**\$** IN 2002 Tyco International’s bosses were found to have siphoned hundreds of millions of dollars out of the maker of electrical, healthcare and safety equipment. Much of it funded the lavish lifestyle of Tyco boss Dennis Kozlowski.

**\$** A £1.4 BILLION fraud at camera makers Olympus was unearthed in late 2011

after management had simply buried losses for 13 years.

**\$** THE CREDIT crisis of 2007 and 2008 saw the biggest collective financial scandal. But the leaders of banks such as Royal Bank of Scotland and Lehman Brothers were deemed to be incompetent, deluded or victims of events.

We’re still paying for the bailouts.

**\$** TESCO, BRITAIN’S biggest retailer, last year revealed it had overstated estimated profits by £263 million by overestimating revenues paid to it by suppliers.

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

### INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

### REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

### THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

### INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to [www.swp.org.uk](http://www.swp.org.uk) or phone 020 7819 1170 for more information

## { SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

### BLACK COUNTRY

**Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour Party and the fight against austerity**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Grain Store, King St,  
Wolverhampton WV1 1ST

### MANCHESTER

**Resistance and the case for revolution**

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

### POOLE

**Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour Party and the fight against austerity**

Mon 12 Oct, 7.30pm,  
The Blue Boar pub (near  
multi storey car park),  
29 Market Close, BH15 1NE

## { SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

### BARNSELEY

**Are there lessons for today from the 1917 Russian Revolution?**

Thu 8 Oct, 6.30pm,  
YMCA,  
Blucher St, S70 1AP

### BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

**Fortress Europe—the war against migrants**

Wed 7 Oct, 7pm,  
Birmingham LGBT Centre,  
38/40 Holloway Circus,  
B1 1EQ

### BRIGHTON

**How can we kick the Tories out?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Ship St,  
BN1 1AF

### BRISTOL: NORTH

**Refugee crisis—why we say 'open the borders'**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
5th Floor,  
The Canteen, Hamilton House,  
80 Stokes Croft,  
BS1 3QY

### BRISTOL: SOUTH

**Palestine—resistance and revolution**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
YHA, Narrow Quay,  
BS1 4QA

### CHESTERFIELD

**1973, Chile and Allende's Popular Unity government—lessons for today?**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Chesterfield Library  
(enter via Cafe Browser),  
New Beetwell St,  
S40 1QL

### CHELMSFORD

**How left wing is anarchism?**

Thu 15 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Rainsford Rd,  
CM1 2QL

### COLCHESTER

**The politics of nuclear power**

Tue 6 Oct, 7.30pm,  
The Odd One Out,  
28 Mersea Rd, CO2 7ET

### COVENTRY

**Cuts and ideology—the Tory attack on education**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
West Indian Centre,  
159 Spon St,  
CV1 3BB

### DONCASTER

**Cuts that kill—how can we fight the Tories' assault on disability benefits?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Women's Centre,  
21 Cleveland St,  
DN1 3EH

### EDINBURGH

**The state and revolution today**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
7 Victoria Terrace, EH1 2JL

## SOCIALIST WORKER BRANCH MEETINGS

# How we beat the anti-union laws in the past—and how we can do it today

Trade unionists march against the Tories' Industrial Relations Bill in 1971

### CARDIFF

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Cathays Community Centre,  
Cathays Terrace,  
CF24 4HX

Conference Room,  
272 High St, Chatham,  
ME4 4BP

### LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Wed 7 Oct, 7pm,  
Oxford House,  
Derbyshire St

(opposite Bethnal Green Rd Tesco),  
E2 6HG

### PLYMOUTH

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
Quaker House,  
74 Mutley Plain,  
PL4 6LF

### GLASGOW: NORTH

**Is obesity a symptom of capitalism?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Posh Nosh Cafe,  
86 Maryhill Rd (near  
St George's Cross  
Underground),  
G20 7QB

### GLASGOW: SOUTH

**The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Govanhill Baths,  
99 Calder St,  
G42 7RA

### HUDDERSFIELD

**How real is the 'terrorist threat'?**

Wed 7 Oct, 6.30pm,  
Brian Jackson House,  
2 New North Parade (near  
both train and bus stations),  
HD1 5JP

### HULL

**Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour Party and the fight against austerity**

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
Grafton Hotel,  
114-116 Grafton St, HU5 2NP

### KIRKCALDY

**Labour's golden age? The 1945 Labour government**

Mon 5 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Betty Nicol's pub,  
297 High St, KY1 1JL

### LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

**Is China's economy in trouble?**

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
Swarthmore Education Centre,  
2-7 Woodhouse Sq, LS3 1AD

### LONDON: BRENT & HARROW

**China's crash and the world economy**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
The Pepperpot Centre,

1a Thorpe Close,  
Ladbroke Grove (close to  
the station), W10 5XL

### LONDON: BRIXTON

**The roots of racism and the fight against it today**

Wed 7 Oct, 7pm,  
Vida Walsh Centre,  
2b Saltoun Rd (near  
Effra Rd, facing Windrush  
Square), SW2 1EP

### LONDON: CROYDON

**A Rebel's Guide to Lenin**

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
Mind in Croydon,  
Fairfield House (opposite  
East Croydon station),  
10 Altyre Rd, CR0 5LA

### LONDON: EALING

**Where next in the fight against austerity?**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
West London Trade Union Club,  
33-35 High St, Acton, W3 6ND

### LONDON: HACKNEY

**Can 'Corbynomics' work?**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
The Round Chapel,  
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner  
Lower Clapton Rd),  
E5 0PU

### LONDON: HORNSEY

**AND WOOD GREEN  
A Rebel's Guide to Lenin**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.15pm,  
West Indian Cultural Centre,  
9 Clarendon Rd,  
Haringey, N8 0DJ

### LONDON: ISLINGTON

**Why migrants are welcome here**

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
The Old Fire Station,  
84 Mayton St, N7 6QT

### LONDON: KINGSTON

**Why did Syriza fail?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7pm,  
Kingston Quaker Centre,  
Fairfield East, KT1 2PT

### LONDON: NEWHAM

**What do we mean by revolution?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7pm,  
Stratford Advice Arcade,  
107-109 The Grove (next to  
Morrisons car park),  
E15 1HP

### LONDON: SOUTHWARK

**The Labour left in power—Poplar, Lambeth and Liverpool**

Thu 8 Oct, 7pm,  
Camberwell Leisure  
Centre (Room 2),  
Artichoke Place (off  
Camberwell Church St),  
SE5 8TS

### LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

**The challenge of Podemos**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Quaker Meeting House,  
1a Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),  
E17 4QU

### LUTON

**Refugee crisis in Europe—why we say 'open the borders'**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Stockwood Hotel,  
41-43 Stockwood Crescent  
(enter via the car park on  
London Rd),  
LU1 3SS

### NORWICH

**Refugee crisis in Europe—why we say 'open the borders'**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Vauxhall Centre,  
Johnson Place,  
NR2 2SA

### NOTTINGHAM

**After Corbyn will the union leaders fight austerity?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
International Community  
Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd,  
NG1 3FN

### OXFORD

**Can 'Corbynomics' work?**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Restore,  
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),  
OX4 1YH

### PORTSMOUTH

**Oxbridge toffs vs the rest of us—how our education system divides us**

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Somerstown Central,  
Rivers St, PO5 4EY

### SHEFFIELD

**Chile 1973—lessons from Allende's Popular Unity government**

Thu 8 Oct, 7.30pm,  
Central United Reformed  
Church, 60 Norfolk St (near  
Crucible Theatre), S1 2JB

### WIGAN

**Fortress Europe—the war on migrants and refugees**

Wed 7 Oct Sep, 7pm,  
Little Fifteen pub,  
17-19 Wallgate (opposite  
Wigan Post Office), WN1 1LD

## { MOVEMENT EVENTS }

### DORCHESTER

**Cameron, Calais and austerity**

Sat 3 Oct, 1.30pm,  
Colliton Club (opposite  
County Hall), Colliton Park,  
DT1 1XJ.

Organised by Dorset Socialists

### LONDON

**Syriza—Inside the Labyrinth**

Kevin Ovenden in conversation with Stathis Kouvelakis.

Wed 7 Oct, 6.30pm,  
Room K4U.12, Centre for  
Hellenic Studies, King's  
College London, Strand,  
WC2R 2LS. £2. Phone

020 7637 1848 or go to  
[bookmarksbookshop.co.uk](http://bookmarksbookshop.co.uk)

### Marxism and Women's Liberation

Book launch with Judith Orr

Mon 12 Oct, 6.30pm,  
Room 642,  
Institute of Education,  
20 Bedford Way, WC1H 0AL.

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or go to [bookmarksbookshop.co.uk](http://bookmarksbookshop.co.uk)

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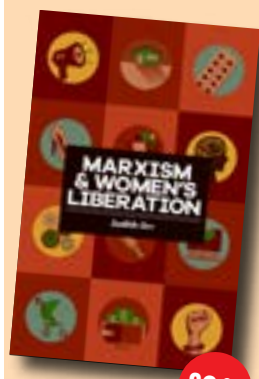
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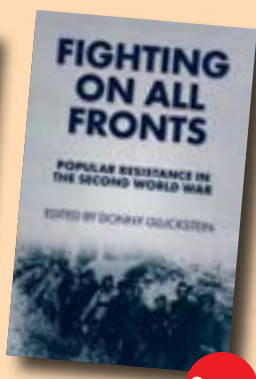
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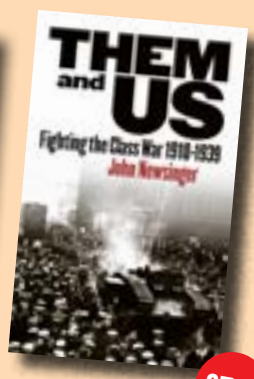
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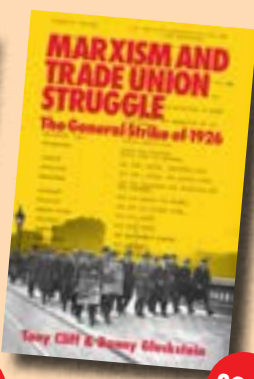
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# Funny play about the planet that takes a swipe at the rich

Theatrically brilliant *Fuck the Polar Bears* gets across the claustrophobia of family life—but don't pity the miserable rich, says **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

**TANYA RONDER'S** new play is based around a middle class family's travails, the dangers of climate change and a toy polar bear.

But with the help of a funny script and strong performances, it avoids being preachy or boring.

Watching the opening scene, it isn't obvious what *Fuck the Polar Bears* is about. Gordon (Andrew Whipp), who we later find out is a big shot energy boss, waltzes in with champagne and a stack of pizzas.

Fitness freak wife Serena (Susan Stanley) is preoccupied with making sure he's got the money together for their new place on the river in Hampton. Luckily, Gordon has just been offered a promotion worth £2.4 million.

But they're arguing almost immediately about different aspects of their "empty" lives.

The play is theatrically brilliant, with the stage set up as their living room.

It feels intrusive and mirrors how all the angst of their family life is trapped inside those four walls.

During the weekend they crack under the strain.

The household appliances begin to malfunction—first Gordon's phone, then his laptop, before he starts to imagine that the drains are blocked.

A spinning stage emphasises Gordon's growing breakdown.

Throughout the play their daughter Rachel (Bella Anne Padden) is looking frantically for a toy polar bear that she is convinced is real.

Gordon becomes convinced he can see the polar bear darting around the room.

In reality, it's a hamster that their militant environmentalist Icelandic au pair Blundhilde (Salome R Gunnarsdottir) has freed.

Everything comes to a head when Rachel appears dressed in her new polar bear suit.

His whole world spinning, Gordon chases the apparition of climate change around the room with a knife.

The ending seems a bit anticlimactic, but remains open ended.

When Serena explains that she hates their life Gordon replies, "It's not easy having the Cabinet in your pocket," and ponders going into renewables.

The unhappy rich? I don't buy it.

With his new-found environmental awareness, Gordon asks to turn out the lights. Rachel pleads, "But daddy, I don't like it with the lights out." But perhaps it's a little too late for them.

*Fuck the Polar Bears*  
By Tanya Ronder  
The Bush Theatre, London W12 8LJ  
Until 24 October

## Ai Weiwei at London's Royal Academy



AI WEIWEI with his installation *Straight* at the Royal Academy of Arts

PICTURE: ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS/DAVE PARRY

## Show doesn't do hero Ai Weiwei justice

### EXHIBITION

#### AI WEIWEI

Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, London W1J 0BD. Until 13 December [royalacademy.org.uk](http://royalacademy.org.uk)

AI WEIWEI notoriously filled the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern with millions of porcelain, hand-painted 'Sunflower Seeds' in 2010 and 2011.

They were produced by 1,600 workers in the village of Jingdezhen.

Yet during that exhibition, Weiwei disappeared and was held by China's state forces for 81 days.

His recreation of this experience 'S.A.C.R.E.D.' is included in this retrospective of his work since 1993.

The largest floor space is filled with 'Straight'.

Ninety tons of steel rods from schools in the Sichuan province devastated by earthquakes in 2008 have been straightened to form an undulating wave.

But there are many contradictions about this event.

It will be a money-spinner for a very conservative institution. But the work is underwhelming. There is nothing as breathtaking as 'Sunflower Seeds'. Many of the pieces are shallow jokes or simplistic metaphors.

Ai Weiwei is a true hero. It's a shame this show doesn't do him justice.

**Nick Grant**

For a longer version go to [socialistworker.co.uk](http://socialistworker.co.uk)

### BLACK HISTORY

SOCIALIST WORKER takes a look at a selection of upcoming events for this year's Black History Month:

### EXHIBITION

#### NO COLOUR BAR—BLACK BRITISH ART IN ACTION 1960-1990

Guildhall Art Gallery, City of London, until 24 January 2016

THIS FREE and interactive exhibition focuses on the works of Eric and Jessica Huntley and the Bogle L'Overture Press.

They founded this publishing house and black bookshop in 1968.

The exhibition looks at some of the political leaders and artists from the period.

It explores global black liberation struggles as well as the fight against racism in Britain.

### MUSIC

#### CALL MR ROBESON. A LIFE, WITH SONGS

Saturday 3 October, 7.30pm, The Brindley, Manchester WA7 1BG

NIGERIAN BORN singer Tayo Aluko will perform the music of US socialist and civil rights campaigner Paul Robeson.

It includes a dramatic



Tayo Aluko

rendition of Ol' Man River about racism and the Mississippi Delta in the Deep South.

The show will tour throughout Black History Month in the North of England, the South West and finish up in London.

### POETRY

#### ISLAND LIFE—CELEBRATING CARIBBEAN CONNECTIONS

Thursday 8 October, 7.30pm, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, G3 7DN. Adults £14, concessions £12, under 18s £5 Book at [ticketsglasgow.com](http://ticketsglasgow.com)

THIS EVENING features Caribbean and Scottish poetry set to music and will try to explore what island life is like in both places.

There will also be a performance in Dundee.

For more events go to [blackhistorymonth.org.uk](http://blackhistorymonth.org.uk)

**T**HE Labour right are gunning for Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour left.

No sooner had 60 per cent of Labour Party members and supporters elected him leader, a slew of right wingers resigned from the shadow cabinet.

But the likes of Blairites Chuka Umunna and Tristram Hunt, who talked about setting up a “resistance group”, haven’t gone away. And they aren’t the only ones on the attack.

Every time Corbyn makes a policy announcement, someone from the shadow cabinet undermines him.

For many of the 60,000 people who’ve joined Labour since Corbyn’s election, the Blairites represent all that’s wrong with the party.

Those new recruits include 17,000 who’ve rejoined after leaving in disillusionment and disgust at Tony Blair.

But it isn’t only Blairites trying to undermine Corbyn.

The Labour Party was born out of an unhappy compromise between socialists and trade union leaders.

It matched a genuine desire for working class representation. But the party was dominated by MPs and union officials.

The party’s aim is to be an election-winning machine that can push through some reforms in parliament.

While Labour was set up to represent workers’ interests, it buys into the myth of a “national interest” and so tries to make peace with the bosses.

This tension produces the battle between left and right in the party.

The Blairites, in groups such as the Progress think tank, came out of the defeats of the working class and the left in the 1980s.

### Punished

Workers punished Labour in the 1979 general election, which Margaret Thatcher won, for implementing austerity.

The Labour left made headway under Tony Benn, but a large chunk of the right split to form the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

The leadership tried to appease the rest of the right and got trounced in the 1983 general election. They then argued that the party could only get back into office by accepting Tory policies.

Neil Kinnock, who became leader after the defeat, scolded the left. “The religion of socialism is the language of priorities,” he said.

Kinnock meant that socialist principles could no longer be a priority.

But some took this “new realism” further and wanted Labour to become an out and out capitalist party, such as the US Democrats, without links to the

trade union movement.

While most of the Labour establishment thought dumping socialist policies was necessary to get back into office, not everyone wanted to go as far as the Blairites.

So Ed Miliband’s failed policy chief Jon Cruddas is heading up another project, ironically known as “Red Shift”.

It aims to win a Labour majority in England by dumping Blair’s neoliberalism, appealing to “traditional working class



**The Labour left has repeatedly backed down from taking on the right**



LEFT AND Right unite—Roy Hattersley, Neil Kinnock, Eric Heffer and Michael Foot at Labour’s conference in 1985

PICTURE: JOHN STURROCK

# LABOUR— PARTY OF CONFLICT

Divisions between the left and right within the Labour Party are big news. They flow from a compromise that lies at the heart of the party, writes **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

John McDonnell

said, “This has shaken the Labour establishment.” It certainly has, but it has shaken union leaders too, because they’re part of the Labour establishment.

Union leaders have posed as a left wing opposition to New Labour and the majority back Corbyn’s leadership bid. But they aren’t his natural allies.

Their role is to balance between workers’ demands and the bosses’ needs and argue the only way to get social change is through a Labour government.

They backed Corbyn partly out of a sense of revenge on New Labour “taking them for granted”. And backing him allowed them to point to an alternative to workers taking action.

Their strategy has been to get “working class candidates elected”.

The Unite and the GMB unions now have a large number of sponsored MPs, but it doesn’t mean they are on the left.

The old AEEU union was a bastion of the Labour right and produced many frontbenchers.

### Undermine

If Corbyn doesn’t look on course to win the general election, the union leaders will turn on him and the left. Throughout the TUC conference, they were already trying to quietly undermine him. “The jury’s out,” said GMB general secretary Paul Kenny, while McCluskey warned, “He’s got a week.”

But so far Corbyn and his allies have responded by being on the defensive.

The Labour left is committed to parliament and winning elections. That’s why historically it has repeatedly backed down from taking on the right in the name of “unity” and maintaining a “broad church”.

In his book *In Place of Fear*, left winger Anuerin Bevan explained that the defeat of the 1926 general strike meant the best hope for workers was winning reforms through parliament. While some in the Labour left look to the movement outside, it still thinks change will come through parliament.

Shadow chancellor John McDonnell has talked about going on tour and setting up local participatory budgeting meetings as part of a new movement. But the danger is that such a movement remains clearly within Labour and aimed at parliamentary politics.

The Labour right’s strategy isn’t to launch a coup. It is to grind down the left, compromise Corbyn and demoralise his supporters.

The right will not be beaten by internal battles inside the Labour Party machine. Our strength does not lie in upstairs rooms in pubs or party sub-committees.

It lies in building a movement independent of Labour that can beat the right and take on austerity.

values” and pandering to Ukip’s racism. This group, including shadow health secretary Heidi Alexander, is trying to rebrand the Labour right’s weak and unappealing brand.

But there’s also a “soft left” within the parliamentary party backed up by the union leaders, which includes shadow frontbenchers Angela Eagle and Andy Burnham.

During Corbyn’s 99th and final rally in Islington, Unite union leader Len McCluskey



LABOUR DELEGATES try to speak during a defence debate in 1988 PICTURE: JOHN STURROCK

## Nuclear is key debate to split party between left and right

**B** RITAIN'S nuclear arsenal was spawned in total secrecy by Clement Attlee's reforming Labour government of 1945.

But Jeremy Corbyn's unilateralism—dumping Britain's nuclear arsenal—has long been a rallying cry of the Labour left.

The annual Labour conference punch ups were a big focus for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) movement.

The Labour left took up unilateralism, but its leaders ended up capitulating under pressure.

Labour left leader Aneurin Bevan denounced unilateralism at the 1957 Labour conference as sending the foreign secretary “naked into the conference chamber ... to preach sermons ... you call that statesmanship? I call it an emotional spasm.”

He'd done it to keep the party together, and taken Labourism to its logical end.

CND aimed to win Labour to unilateralism through the party's left.

Ten thousand protesters descended on the 1960 Labour conference, which supported unilateralism 3,303,000 to 2,896,000.

The union leaders had backed it—only to slap the

party leadership on the wrists and help trounce it the following year.

Today the Unison union is against Trident renewal, Unite and the GMB support it.

Labour's right wing leader Hugh Gaitskell vowed to “fight, fight, fight and fight again” over unilateralism.

But the leadership didn't have to—it just ignored it. That continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Michael Foot, Labour leader in the 1983 election, was a staunch unilateralist. The right will try to beat Corbyn with Foot's stick.

Dumping it was portrayed as symbolic of the party becoming “electable”, but Labour didn't lose because of unilateralism.

Workers' confidence to change society dipped as struggles in the 1970s went down.

And Foot helped the Tories with jingoist speeches supporting the Falklands war and appeased the right in his own party.

It's good for Labour members to fight to win the argument against Trident renewal.

But stopping it requires a powerful movement aimed at social change—not a yearly tussle at Labour Party conference.



Former Labour leader Aneurin Bevan (top) and Michael Foot (above)

### READ MORE

● **A Marxist History of the Labour Party**  
by Donny Gluckstein and Tony Cliff  
£5

● **Parliamentary socialism**  
by Ralph Miliband  
£16.95

● **Can Len McCluskey reclaim Labour?**  
by Julie Sherry  
bit.ly/1MtSWmT

● **Letter to a Jeremy Corbyn supporter**  
by Charlie Kimber  
bit.ly/1jhtjqf

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## Panicking elite try to divert blame for Hajj disaster

Political pressure is growing in Saudi Arabia after over 700 pilgrims were crushed to death last week, writes Yuri Prasad

THE SAUDI elite were quick to respond to last week's disaster at the Hajj, the annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. Before the long rows of white-shrouded dead pilgrims were counted, they at least knew who not blame for the tragedy.

Saudi Arabia's top religious leader, Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Sheikh, quickly reassured crown prince Mohammed bin Nayef.

The Mufti insisted, “You are not responsible for what happened...fate and destiny are inevitable.”

This must have come as some relief to the crown prince, since he doubles as Saudi Arabia's interior minister and chairs the Hajj committee.

He was already under considerable pressure after a crane collapsed at the Grand Mosque, Islam's holiest site, killing 109 people days before the pilgrimage began.

But invoking providence was never going to pacify Iran's rulers, who counted 131 citizens among the dead.

### Prayers

Leading the main weekly prayers in Tehran, Ayatollah Mohammad Emami Kashani said, “Saudi Arabia is incapable of organising the pilgrimage.”

“The running of the Hajj must be handed over to Islamic states.”

Of course it was the contest between Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran for regional dominance that lay behind the war of words.

But disdain for the increasing commercialisation of Mecca and the Hajj pilgrimage are widely shared.

According to the Mecca chamber of commerce, Saudi Arabia earned about £5.6 billion from last year's Hajj—a rise of 3 percent on 2013.

A pilgrim who travels from another country spends an

PILGRIMS MAKE their way to Mecca

### BACK STORY

**Last week's disaster is the latest in a series of deaths at the Hajj pilgrimage**

● **January 2006**—over 360 killed. The day before 73 died after a hostel collapsed

● **February 2004**—crush kills 244 pilgrims

● **April 1998**—some 180 trampled to death

● **April 1997**—at least 340 killed

● **July 1990**—1,426 die in the worst Hajj-related tragedy

average of £3,050 during the five days. And for the wealthiest of the faithful, rents for local five star hotels this year soared by £12,300.

Many are angered by the Saudi government's constant cash-grabbing. This includes razing religious sites to make way for still more hotels and shopping malls.

The house of the Prophet Mohammed's companion Abu Bakr has given way to a Hilton hotel.

Resentment of the Saudi

“**Saudi Arabia earned about £5.6 billion from last year's Hajj**”

elite leads many to alternative explanations for this year's carnage.

Several Arabic newspapers insist the crush happened because police suddenly blocked roads that allow thousands of pilgrims to walk to the “stoning the devil” ritual.

It is said they were allowing a royal motorcade to speed through the throngs.

Ahmed Abu Bakr, a Libyan who escaped the crush with his mother, said, “There was crowding. The police had closed all entrances and exits to the pilgrims' camp, leaving only one.”

### Emergency

It has also been pointed out that, following the initial loss of life, Saudi emergency services had too few language and practical skills to deal with the array of Muslims.

In the panic following the first crush, they could not communicate with the majority of pilgrims and that in itself resulted many more deaths.

Sensing that “fate” might not be a good enough explanation for loss of life, some of the Saudi elite are trying another ploy.

Prince Khalid al-Faisal now blames the “stampede” on “some pilgrims with African nationalities”.

The racist outburst is unlikely to quell the growing anger.

Instead it will rightly feed those who hope that the Arab Spring can be revived to deal a death blow to at least one more corrupt regime.



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**Ian Hodson**  
BFAWU national president

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# Racist Tory strategy takes aim at children

Muslim school pupils, teachers and academics are increasingly being treated as a threat, says **Judith Orr**

A 14 year old Muslim school student was questioned about Isis after using the term “ecoterrorism” in class earlier this year, it has been revealed.

The incident shows how the Tories are using their Prevent strategy to ramp up Islamophobia.

They claim they are “protecting” young Muslims. But they are driving an Islamophobic agenda that is whipping up racism.

The boy was taking part in a discussion on the environment in a French class in May.

He said that some people who protected forests drilled nails into trees to blunt chainsaws.

Speaking in French he said some called this “ecoterrorisme”. After saying he sounded like a “tree hugger” a teacher asked him if he was “affiliated” with the violent Islamic group Isis.

He was taken from his next French class to an “inclusion centre” in the Central Foundation boys school in north London. Here a child protection officer and another adult further questioned him.

He said later, “I didn’t know what was going on. They said there had been safety concerns raised.

“If you are taken out of French class and asked about Isis, it is quite scary. My heart skipped a beat.”

The school student said his class mates of all backgrounds have been very supportive and think he was targeted because of his religion.

## Guilty

His mother is sure. She said, “He was presumed guilty because he was Muslim.”

The parents are taking legal action against the school.

In another case a Muslim teaching assistant was sacked after objecting to showing a graphic video of the 9/11 attacks to a class of 11 year olds on Monday of last week.

Suriyah Bi had been employed at Heartlands Academy in Birmingham for only a week when she raised concern about the suitability of the video.

## BACK STORY

**The Prevent strategy treats all Muslims as potential terrorists**

● Labour began the programme and the Tories have expanded it

● They claim it is about stopping “extremism” and “radicalisation”

● In reality it makes it easier for the state to monitor Muslims

● The Tories expect workers such as teachers to spy on students and report any “concerns”

● The policy boosts the racist idea that Muslims are a particular problem and threat

She said some children in the class had no idea what 9/11 was or what they were about to watch.

The newly qualified graduate pointed out to the class teacher that the video was clearly flagged up as only suitable for over 18 year olds. She was sacked within 24 hours.

A Muslim student at Staffordshire university also spoke out about his treatment last week.

The university was forced to apologise to him after he was reported for reading a textbook titled Terrorism Studies in the university library.

Mohammed Umar Farooq was part of the university’s “terrorism, crime and global security” master’s programme.

He was grilled by a university official in the library about his views on homosexuality, Isis and al Qaeda. Mohammed has dropped the course and is taking legal advice.

He said, “This could happen to any young Muslim lad. I had to fight back.”

A Students Not Suspects tour has been organised by the National Union of Students, Black Students Campaign and others. For more information go to [bit.ly/1KJPVv7](http://bit.ly/1KJPVv7).



## On other pages...

Junior doctors consider action over pay attacks >>> **Page 20**



**HOME SECRETARY Theresa May, David Cameron and a cop pictured last year as Britain's terror threat level was raised to 'severe'. The Tories have clamped down on Muslims in the name of 'anti-terrorism'**

## Nine year olds face ‘racial profiling in British schools’ because of Prevent

PRIMARY SCHOOL children face increasing racial profiling, according to a new report.

The study by the Claystone think tank exposes the impact of the government’s Prevent programme.

Muslim children as young as nine are under scrutiny that “clearly points to a pattern of ethnic profiling in counter-radicalisation policy in British schools”.

The report Building Distrust: Religious Profiling in Primary Schools looked at a programme in Waltham Forest in east London.

The Building Resilience through Integration and Trust (BRIT) programme claimed to be concerned only with “community cohesion”.

A council representative told schools that BRIT offered a “rare opportunity to receive free, intensive and wraparound support for some of our most vulnerable families.”

Local parents and teachers raised questions about its real purpose. Yet the council maintained it had nothing to do with Prevent or anti-terrorism.

Email exchanges published following Freedom of Information



**Muslim students are treated as a threat**

requests show different. One email is from a council official responsible for the project encouraging schools to join it.

It includes the passage, “Given recent national events, such as the Trojan Horse plot in Birmingham schools, the Rotherham CSE case and international crisis in Syria, Gaza and Iraq, we hope you feel this is both pertinent and timely.”

As the report points out this list of events “seen as relevant to radicalisation only relate to ‘Muslim problems’.”

It did not mention the racist English Defence League, which has a history of activity in the borough.

The programme included a survey supposedly to measure its

impact. It was to be anonymous but was an underhand method of identifying children perceived to be on the “pathway” to terrorism.

It asked children to “name your closest friends” and “name the religious faith (if any) of each of your closest friends”.

Follow-up emails from BRIT officials name specific children and propose investigations of their views and family situations on the basis of their responses.

Questions included asking if the pupil agreed with statements such as, “If a student were making fun of my religion, I would try and make him/her stop—even if it required hurting them.”

Many statements referred to religious belief, such as, “The only acceptable religion is my religion.”

That report concluded that there is no evidence “to link perceived psychological vulnerabilities to a risk of becoming a terrorist, indeed, issues surrounding identity are prevalent among children and teenagers in general”.

It criticised Prevent for seeking “to build a picture that British Muslim children are both the ‘suspect would-be terrorist’ and in need of being ‘saved’.”

## IN BRIEF

**Mine's a continuous overtime ban**

AROUND 200 workers at Carlsberg's site in Northampton were set to begin a continuous overtime ban and work to rule on Thursday of this week.

The engineers, brewers, processors and packers in the Unite union are angry at bosses' pay freeze. In a ballot they also voted for strikes by 77 percent.

**Industrial threat won improved offer**

REFUSE WORKERS in the Unite union in Bromley, south east London, have won an increased pay offer by threatening strikes.

Outsourcing giant Veolia offered them 1 percent—but came back with 2 percent after the strike threat.

**Protesters outside Ukip conference**

A SMALL group of protesters demonstrated against Ukip in Doncaster, South Yorkshire, last Saturday.

The protest, organised by Stand Up To Ukip, coincided with Ukip's annual conference in the town.

**Aye to Refugees—and Nae to Nazis**

ANTI-RACISTS WERE set to protest against the Scottish Defence League's (SDL) plans to mobilise in Edinburgh on Saturday of this week.

Edinburgh Against the Racist SDL have called a counter demonstration. ●Aye to Refugees—Nae to Nazis Sat 3 October, 1pm, The Mound, Edinburgh

**No recognition at Royal Albert Hall**

THE BECTU union is in dispute with management at the Royal Albert Hall in central London after bosses rejected a ballot for union recognition.

Some 117 workers voted for recognition, while 109 voted against.

Boss Chris Cotton claimed it meant only 37.5 percent of workers were in favour of recognition. But Bectu says he previously agreed to accept a majority vote.

**Protest for missing Mexican students**

MORE THAN 150 people protested outside the Mexican Embassy in London on Saturday of last week.

They are demanding justice for 43 student teachers who disappeared in the town of Iguala last year.

Sunday marked one year since the students were violently arrested following a protest, never to be seen again.

Other protests took place around Mexico and outside its embassies across the world.

## EDUCATION



PROTEST OUTSIDE Labour controlled Leeds city council against cuts to three care homes on Wednesday of last week

PICTURE: CHRISTIAN HOGSBJERG

## MANUFACTURING WORKERS

# Anger but no fight as steel plant mothballed

by DAVE SEWELL

THE BOSSES of the last steel plant in Redcar, Teesside, announced they were “mothballing” it on Monday of this week, with the loss of 1,700 jobs. Production was “paused” earlier this month.

But as working class people across the region joined calls to save jobs, politicians and union leaders quietly refused to do anything about it.

The plant—still the second largest in Europe—faces permanent damage as its furnaces stop burning. Coal and iron ore supplies are waiting on ships a few miles away but they won't unload as SSI can't pay.

Around 2,000 workers and supporters rallied outside on Thursday of last week. They

held up torches and phones to “keep the light burning” at the furnaces that have lit the town up for decades.

The plant has 2,000 employees and around 1,000 contractors. Its closure would be a bitter blow—and the calls to save it have caught the imagination of the region.

**SOS**

At Middlesbrough FC's match on Saturday players warmed up in “Save Our Steel” T-shirts and sections of the crowd spelled out “SOS”.

But for all the talk of creating a Northern Powerhouse, the government insists it can do nothing to stop the closure.

And the Unite and GMB trade unions, which talk so much about saving manufacturing jobs when

there's a debate on getting rid of Trident, aren't doing much more. GMB hailed the fact that workers even got paid last Friday as proof that its “pressure” is “paying off”.

Campaigning did save the plant after it was mothballed by previous owner Tata Steel in 2010. But with profits in steel manufacture running low there is no new owner waiting in the wings now.

It will take serious action to save it. The government could nationalise it, and build infrastructure for human need not profit.

The unions could picket and occupy to keep the liquidators' hands off. Instead workers, their families and their whole community are paying the price for the crisis in the bosses' system.

## EDUCATION

## Ballot in colleges for strike over pay freeze ‘offer’

COLLEGE LECTURERS are balloting for strikes over pay.

The ballot, involving UCU union members in further education (FE) across England, could see tens of thousands of lecturers strike later this year.

The union had asked college bosses to agree to a £1 an hour pay rise for all staff. But the bosses' Association of Colleges instead recommended a pay freeze.

The attack on pay comes as FE lecturers face a massive assault on jobs.

A government cut of 24 percent to adult education funding has led to colleges across Britain announcing redundancies

and cuts. Lecturers' pay has effectively been cut by more than 17 percent over the last six years.

If the new attack goes through it will pile more pressure on lecturers to leave—and hit students' education.

Members should organise meetings in their workplaces to organise to get out the yes vote. The ballot ends on 15 October.

**Sadie Robinson**

●The UCU Left, which Socialist Worker supports, has called a national conference for Sat 10 Oct, University College London. Go to [bit.ly/1NWCpcV](http://bit.ly/1NWCpcV) for details and to register

## HIGHER EDUCATION

## Lecturers' pay briefings can prepare for action

UCU UNION members in higher education are holding a series of briefings over pay.

Some 40 reps attended one in London last week, while 16 union branches were represented in Edinburgh.

Lecturers agreed that the union should campaign over pay—but there was disagreement over whether there should be a strike ballot now or next year.

Some in the union were pessimistic about the possibility of winning support for action.

But others argued that the union leadership had a responsibility for building successful campaigns and giving workers' confidence by

showing it was serious about fighting. Workers who are less confident can be won to supporting strikes if the argument is made.

Reps felt the national union should better prepare workers for the possibility of strikes. A proper campaign can galvanise workers and build a strong fight over pay.

The Tories are likely to unleash more cuts in higher education in November.

Socialist Worker supporters argued that the union should fight over pay this year.

●Birmingham's briefing is on Thursday of this week and Manchester's on Friday. Go to [ucu.org.uk/4101](http://ucu.org.uk/4101) for details

## CONSTRUCTION

## Workers bring dispute back to recycling bosses

THE 24TH day of protest with Sita Waste Management at the ICI Wilton complex near Redcar took place on Friday of last week.

Protesters shut three of the four entrances and slowed the fourth to a vehicle every couple of minutes for almost four hours.

The ongoing dispute is over health and safety, union rep facilities and the undercutting of nationally agreed wages.

Most drivers seemed sympathetic.

Earlier in the week the Unite, GMB and Ucat unions also targeted Sita's Haverton Hill site in Billingham, Teesside.

Protesters disrupted traffic at the gates from 6am until 7.30am creating a long tailback.

Between 7.40am and 10am a small contingent blockaded

the haulage wagons that bring fuel onto the site.

The Friday protest followed protests on Wednesday in Middlesbrough and Thursday in Redcar, when construction workers supported SSI steel workers (see above).

“The protests are sending a strong message to Sita, Sembcorp and Merseyside Waste Authorities ahead of Wednesday's negotiations with Union officials,” said scaffolder Pete.

The unions have also called for a demonstration on Wednesday outside the Mann Island buildings in Liverpool.

This aims to support the union officials and to help push through a national wage audit.

The unions want to put an end to the undercutting of their national wage agreement.

## MUSEUMS

PLANNED STRIKES at the National Museum Wales were suspended last weekend following talks with bosses.

Workers in the PCS union are in dispute over the withdrawal of weekend working allowances.

The change would involve slashing the income of many staff by up to £3,000 a year.

Bosses have offered workers a new deal which PCS says is inferior.

But they have agreed to consult members on whether to ballot to accept the deal after bosses threatened to remove the offer and replace it with an inferior one.

Giving in to this is a mistake. Workers have shown they are up for a fight, walking out in a series of strikes since July. They are still taking part in action short of strike until 30 September. ●Donate to the hardship fund. Bank: Unity Trust Bank Account: PCS Amgueddfa Cymru 107006 Branch Number: 20331827 Sort code: 08-60-01

## GREEN PARTY

## Bennett rules out a move to right at Green conference

UP TO 2,000 Green Party members met for their conference in Bournemouth last weekend.

Speeches touched on how Greens should respond to Jeremy Corbyn becoming Labour Party leader.

The Greens won support as an anti-austerity alternative in the run up to this year's general election. Party membership exploded.

But they failed to gain any MPs beyond Caroline Lucas in Brighton and Hove.

Now Corbyn's success and the revitalised Labour Party overshadow them.

Some on the right of the party argue it should stop presenting itself as a left alternative.

They want to return to emphasising environmentalist politics. But party leader Natalie

**Leader Natalie Bennett**

Bennett said Corbyn's election showed politics was “moving in our direction”.

She said, “What's the difference between Jeremy Corbyn's Labour and the Greens?

“Communities up and down this country who are dealing with Labour councils know one answer to that.”

## TRAFFIC WARDENS

# Large picket lines boost confidence in pay battle

by TOMÁS TENGYEL-EVANS

**TRAFFIC WARDENS** in Camden, central London, began a seven-day strike against low pay on Wednesday of last week.

This is the Unison union members' second walkout within a month.

Workers are fighting private contractor NSL for £9.50 an hour and better terms and conditions. They threw out bosses' initial offer of £9.15 in January.

They currently get £8.92 an hour.

Workers say bosses are also targeting their union.

But the strikers remain solid—and support is spreading across the workforce.

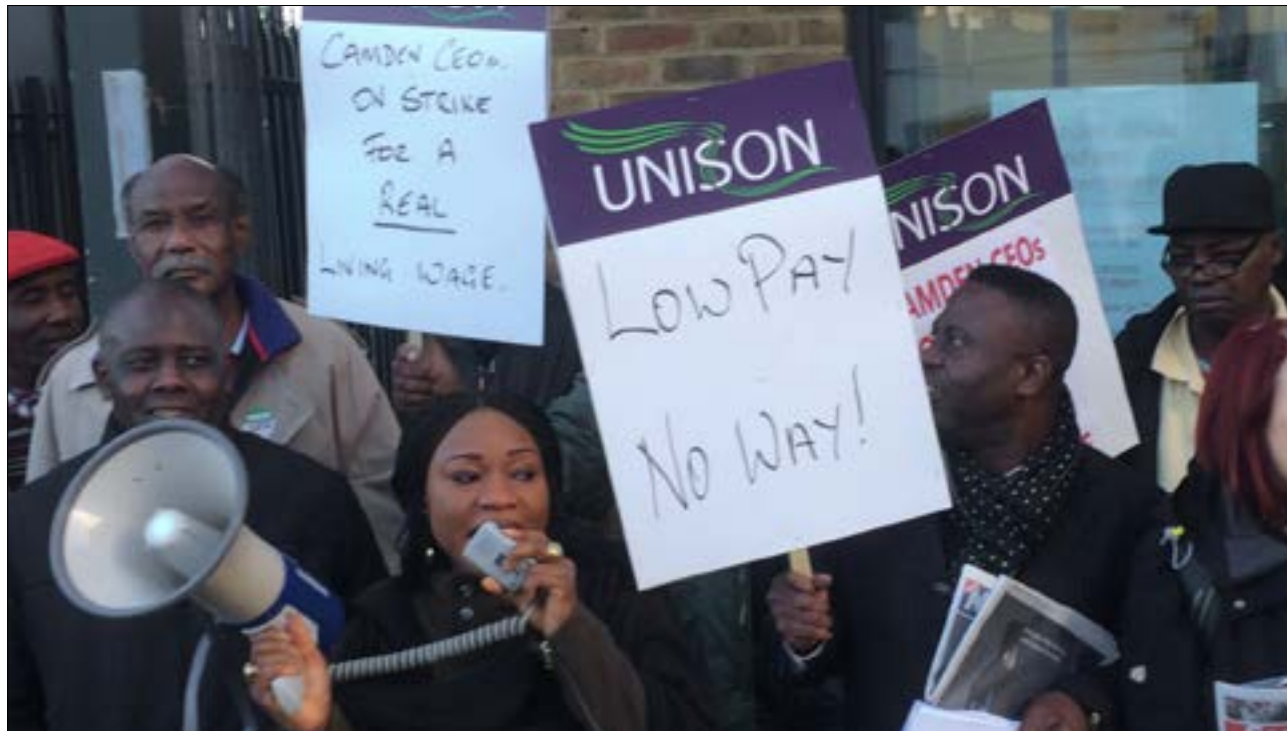
Workers held a large picket of around 40 outside the Regis Road office on Thursday of last week.

During the last strike the two CCTV camera offices all scabbed—but this time they've all walked out.

## Confident

Striker David told Socialist Worker, "Momentum is growing. Everyone's much more confident with the CCTV offices out too."

"We picketed them last time and argued with them not to go into work—and



TRAFFIC WARDENS picket with supporters at the Regis Road site

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

now they're out."

The pickets sang loudly, "I'd rather be a picket than a scab" and chanted "Low pay—no way."

When scabs walked out to work pickets chanted loudly and tried to argue with them.

David told Socialist Worker, "NSL is paying them

good money to do our work for us."

"They've got food and accommodation sorted out for them."

"But NSL can't even give us a small pay rise."

Management has so far been intransigent. But solidarity is pouring in from

other workers in different unions.

Workers raised over £127 at the National Gallery workers' 100th strike day rally (see page 3).

They also got £150 from the firefighters' FBU union's London region and £200 from the lecturers' UCU

union London region.

They will need more support to win.

Trade unionists and campaigners must get behind this group of workers.

Workers' names have been changed. Send messages of solidarity to [georgebinnette@camden.gov.uk](mailto:georgebinnette@camden.gov.uk)

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Striking over privatisation

WORKERS AT Barnet Council in north London were set to strike during the Tory party conference to highlight the danger of outsourcing local government services.

The Unison union members plan to walk out for 24 hours on Wednesday of next week against another wave of privatisation at the Tory-run council.

Barnet Unison chair Helen Davies (pc) explained, "We want to show the reality of mass privatisation policies. Barnet Tories are putting this into practice."

The council has already outsourced hundreds of Barnet workers. Barnet council's latest plans could see children's centres, libraries and social work farmed out.

**Raymie Kiernan**

● Send solidarity messages to [contactus@barnetunison.org.uk](mailto:contactus@barnetunison.org.uk). Donate to Barnet Unison Industrial Action Fund, Building 4, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, N11 1NP

## UNISON ELECTION

# Get behind Burgess

ACTIVISTS IN the Unison union have until 9 October to argue for nominations for John Burgess in the union's general secretary election.

As branch secretary of Barnet Unison, John has a track record as a principled fighter, and his campaign is connecting with a wider mood for change.

The more nominations he gets, the better organised and more effective his campaign can be.

● For more information about the campaign go to [johnburgess4gensec.blogspot.co.uk](http://johnburgess4gensec.blogspot.co.uk)

## SOCIALISTS AND ELECTIONS

# Debating where next for TUSC after Corbyn's win

AROUND 200 people joined the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition's (TUSC) annual conference in central London last Saturday.

Delegates debated the impact of Jeremy Corbyn's Labour leadership victory and the local elections next May.

Charlie Kimber from the Socialist Workers Party said, "Jeremy Corbyn has transformed the political situation. We need to continue to put forward the socialist alternative."

"While we do not rule out standing in elections, we have to be careful about where it's appropriate to stand."

Other speakers included

the Socialist Party's Peter Taaffe, RMT union president Peter Pinkney and the Independent Socialist Network's Will McMahon.

There's a pull for some unions to reaffiliate to the Labour Party.

Some RMT members are pushing for a special conference.

But RMT president Peter Pinkney said, "TUSC is not dead and we're not reaffiliating to the Labour Party."

He said, "What if Jeremy's ousted in six months and the right wingers are back in charge?"

"We'll continue to support TUSC—and wait and see on the Labour Party."

## FIGHTING THE CUTS

# Deaf and disabled people take on Tories

by ELLEN CLIFFORD

AROUND 1,000 deaf and disabled people marched on Downing Street last Saturday.

They were protesting over the effect of cuts to the government's Access to Work scheme (ATW).

This was one of the biggest mobilisations of deaf people in over a decade.

Protesters held up traffic, and handed in a petition signed by over 20,000 people.

ATW was set up to provide support to deaf and disabled people in finding and keeping work.

This can include funding adaptations, aids and equipment, personal assistance and sign language interpreters.

But changes to the scheme are making it harder to access. Some people are



Arriving at Downing Street in central London

PICTURE: @RESISTUNITE

having their support taken away, others will face a cap on their packages.

Geraldine O'Halloran, co-founder of the StopChanges2ATW campaign, said the "intolerable" strain was already driving many deaf and disabled out of work.

Roger Lewis of Disabled

People Against Cuts told Socialist Worker, "We saw deaf people marching with and identifying with disabled people and trade unionists in a common cause."

"This opens up new and very exciting opportunities for broadening and bringing new forces into the fight against the Tories."

## EDINBURGH

# Councillors back down

TRADE UNIONISTS at Edinburgh City Council celebrated a partial victory last week after Labour and Scottish National Party councillors said they wouldn't privatise services.

But the fight is far from over—up to 3,000 jobs are still under threat.

The coalition still wants to make £141 million cuts in the next four years.

Talks with unions are expected over the next couple of weeks before new cuts plans go to a committee at the end of October.

A mass lobby of the meeting is being organised.

# JUNIOR DOCTORS PROTEST FOR NHS

by TOMÁŠ TENGYEL-EVANS

**MORE THAN 3,000 junior doctors marched on Downing Street and blocked Whitehall in central London on Monday of this week.**

This came days after the British Medical Association (BMA) announced it would ballot junior doctors in England for industrial action.

Health secretary Jeremy Hunt is trying to impose new contracts that would rip apart terms and conditions, and put patient safety at risk.

“People are furious,” junior doctor Joe told Socialist Worker. “This is making everyone in the NHS angry.”

The protest assembled outside Westminster Central Hall near parliament, where NHS Employers had called a doctors’ meeting.

But the meeting had been cancelled that afternoon after Hunt agreed to meet with the BMA junior doctors’ committee.

Protesters’ chants of “Save our NHS” and “No ifs, no buts—no junior doctor cuts” echoed outside Westminster.

Police told people that



THOUSANDS OF junior doctors chanted angrily and marched across Parliament Square

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

they couldn’t march without permission. But the swelling crowd poured across Parliament Square, took the road and marched on Downing Street.

The Tories are pumping out propaganda about “greedy

doctors”, but this is not just about pay. The campaign’s slogan is “Not Fair, Not Safe”.

The new contracts could allow NHS trusts to make doctors work a dangerous amount of unsocial hours.

Harry told Socialist

Worker, “We all work long hours because we know that’s what patients need.

“But with more unsocial hours, people will be exhausted. We deal with people’s lives and can’t afford to make mistakes.”

David said, “I’ve had a lot of friends seriously thinking about leaving medicine.”

Emma added, “It would really hit speciality areas such as A&Es and GPs, where there’s already a shortage.”

Joe came with his little

boy. “People imagine a junior doctor is someone in their 20s with no dependents,” he said. “But I’m in a single income family with two kids.”

The new contract could slash pay by up to 40 percent.

It is part of the Tories’ drive for “seven day working”.

But most services already run 24/7.

The Tories just want to smash pay and terms and conditions to soften the NHS up for privatisation.

As Harry said, “If a service looks like it’s failing it’s easier to sell off.”

The doctors’ protest showed a glimpse of the anger that exists among NHS workers.

Unison union leader Dave Prentis said recently that there would be action over attacks on pay and unsocial hours. Unison and other health unions should ballot now.

The BMA hasn’t decided what kind of industrial action to take.

The Tories hope to smash the doctors and then take on unions after ramming through their Trade Union Bill. United strikes now could stop them.

## MIDDLE EAST

# Big powers row over military intervention in Syria at United Nations talks

by JUDITH ORR

THE WORLD’S rulers were debating plans for Syria at the United Nations in New York as Socialist Worker went to press.

David Cameron wants Britain to join the US air strikes in Syria and do a deal with Syria’s dictator Bashar al-Assad to beat the sectarian Islamist group Isis.

Yet two years ago he was arguing to bomb Assad’s forces.

The Western powers have come to see Isis as the greater problem and want Assad onside to beat it.

Yet Isis is a product of

the conditions left by the West’s last war in Iraq.

The renewed bombing there has not stopped Isis forces gaining ground.

Russia—a long time backer of Assad—wants to see him maintain his rule and strengthen its own ability to shape events in the region.

It has escalated the build-up of its military forces in Syria in recent weeks.

France carried out its first air strikes over Syria last weekend.

The conflict in Syria began in 2011 with a popular revolt against Assad’s regime. Any policy that maintains Assad’s

rule ignores the millions of ordinary Syrians who have fought and suffered under his regime.

But the Western powers are only worried about their influence in the region.

Cameron has also announced that British troops will be sent to Somalia, for “peacekeeping” duties.

Up to 300 are also set to be sent to South Sudan.

Cameron admitted part of the motivation for intervention was to stem the exodus of migrants from the region.

Labour’s foreign secretary Hilary Benn claimed on Monday of this

week that “safe zones” within Syria are a solution.

Yet these would have to be policed and that would involve somebody’s troops on the ground.

Benn also called for “effective action to end the threat” from Isis.

This vague assertion shows Benn may push for Labour to back whatever military intervention Cameron might propose.

But no intervention by the West will help those who have suffered under Assad’s barrel bombs or Isis’s guns.

Anti-war activists need to be ready to mobilise to stop a new war in Syria.

Go to [stopwar.org.uk](http://stopwar.org.uk)

US and British warships working together to impose Western influence in the Gulf last year